



# Maine Stream Team Program NEWS

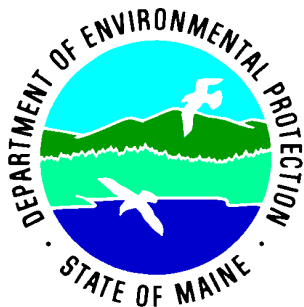
Networking, Education, and Stewardship

Volume 1, Issue 3

Summer 2001

## The Importance of Streamside Forests and In-Stream Wood and Leaves

By Jeff Varricchione



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Did you ever wonder about the “clutter” of trees, branches, and leaves in or around streams? Boy, sometimes it just doesn’t look very clean and tidy out there in Nature, does it? But you know what? This type of apparent “mess” is a good thing. First of all, let’s start with the source of a lot of this clutter: **streamside forests**.

These areas (called **riparian forests**) provide a lot of benefits to streams. They help to protect **water quality** by filtering out much of the potentially harmful material headed towards streams via storm runoff or groundwater. This material includes excess soil/sediment, phosphorous, nitrogen, and toxins. These forests also provide **shade** to keep streams cool. Their root networks help to **stabilize stream banks**. Riparian forests, especially those located in floodplains, help to regulate stream flows during floods. They act as temporary storage areas of water distributed along the length of a stream so that **overall flooding problems are less severe**. Groundwater, which is stored in, and slowly released from these streamside (as well as upland) areas, helps to **maintain stream flow** during dry summer months. Also, riparian forests are critical habitats and travel corridors for many types of **wildlife** including moose, deer, otter, osprey, turtles, frogs, salamanders, and insects...to name a few!



Sometimes, in an attempt to clean up their stream or river, people might decide to pull out all of the “clutter”, or pieces of natural wood and leaves, in and around the water. Though this might seem like a good idea, it generally is not the right thing to do.

Continued on page 7....



## Stream Team Day...A Success!

The Maine Stream Team Program's 1st Annual Stream Team Day, hosted at Gilsland Farm in Falmouth, was a success! It was a meeting for information exchange and networking. Some professionals were on hand to give talks, answer citizen questions, clarify concerns, and discuss goals for the future of Maine's precious streams.



### We'd like to thank our Sponsors and Donors:

Tom's of Maine (River Awareness Program)  
 Maine Mountain Works  
 Portland Public Market  
 Dunkin' Donuts  
 Mr. Bagel  
 Coffee by Design  
 Farm to Market, Inc.  
 US Environmental Protection Agency  
 Maine Audubon Society

**Thank You!!**

## Evaluate *Your* Stream's Health!

**Stream Walks** are designed to teach folks about basic stream ecology and issues and to help them become more familiar with their stream. Folks of all ages are encouraged to get involved. Participants walk part or the entire length of their local streams to determine the quality of the stream's habitat and decide whether potential pollution impacts or other problems are occurring. Stream Walks are a great way to learn more about your stream and the impacts that land uses can have on it! You can present your findings to your school, neighbors, or community leaders. You also can send your findings to the Maine Stream Team Program where they can be used to help prioritize future stream protection efforts.

Contact the MSTP about organizing a workshop for you and your fellow stream protectors!



**Let's Get Out There!!**

# Stream Team Profiles:

## Easton Prestile Stream Team



The Prestile Stream, a small sub-drainage of the St. John River system, has long been noted for an excellent brook trout fishery. Historical reports even indicate that Atlantic Salmon ascended the Prestile Stream at one time. Of course, throughout the years, the stream has been dammed, had multiple discharges from industry, and combined with the introduction of chemical pesticides, fertilizers, and farmland erosion, the fishery took a downward turn throughout the mid 1960's and early 1970's. However, with regulations placed on industry in the 1970's, the stream made a dramatic recovery to regain its reputation as a consistent producer of wild brook trout. Currently, the stream only has to combat nonpoint source pollution\* and is getting a helping hand from the Easton Prestile Stream Team. This team consists of a dozen high school students interested in ecology, and how human interference might be affecting the water quality and the species living in the Prestile

Stream. Throughout the winter and spring, students learned about the importance of clean water, what encompasses the Prestile Stream Watershed, and the sources of nonpoint source pollution found in the watershed. They finished up the school year studying how nonpoint source pollution can be minimized and made recommendations for their school's surface water through their Envirothon presentation. The Easton Prestile Stream Team walked away from this year's regional Envirothon with a first place trophy!! They look forward to learning more about Prestile Stream next school year! (by Tandy Bordner)

~~\* Nonpoint source pollution is also called polluted runoff. It has many diffuse sources such as parking lots, driveways, roads, farms, and lawns.~~

*Point source pollution is discharged from a specific site, such as an industrial outfall pipe.*

## Narraguagus Watershed Council develops community-based management plan!

Cherryfield – In April of this year, the Narraguagus River Watershed Council received a \$65,000 grant from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (319) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program to develop a Watershed Management Plan for the 230 square-mile Narraguagus River Watershed.

To develop the plan, the Council formed a community-based Watershed Management Plan Workgroup comprised of local commercial, residential, and government stakeholders. The group's mission is to identify nonpoint source pollution problems in the Narraguagus River Watershed and to develop a plan for correcting current problems and preventing future problems using best management practices. The Workgroup is made up of several homeowners, selectmen, planning officers, and representatives from International Paper, Wyman and Cherryfield Foods blueberry companies, Worcester Peat Company, Downeast Salmon Federation, and SHARE (Salmon Habitat and Restoration Enhancement).

In addition to the bimonthly meetings to develop the written plan, the group has sponsored several community outreach activities. Since the project began in April, the group has sponsored a river clean-up, a riparian tree planting, a guided canoe trip, salmon fry stocking, a water quality monitoring program, and an interactive watershed-information booth at the Cherryfield 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival. The group is planning a Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention Town Meeting and Lecture Series in the fall of 2001. For more information, please contact the Project Manager, Barbara S. Arter at 546-2018 or bsarter@panax.com. (by Barbara Arter)



**Narraguagus High School Students release salmon fry .**





## Calendar

Would you like to use this calendar and/or the website calendar to help spread the word about your events and/or meetings related to streams or rivers? Send the information to the MSTP address on the back of this newsletter. As more information becomes available for the events below, we will post it in future newsletters and on the "news & calendar" page at our website. (Deadline for submitting calendar items, articles, or profiles for the fall newsletter is October 1, 2001...Thanks!)

### **Androscoggin River Source to the Sea Canoe Trek. July 5 - July 25, 2001.**

The sixth annual Androscoggin River Source to the Sea Canoe Trek celebrates the renaissance of this New England river with a series of guided canoe trips and riverside educational programs from the river's headwaters in New Hampshire to the tidewaters of the Gulf of Maine. Stream Team director Jeff Varricchione is planning to join the Trek on July 15 in the Dixfield area. Free and open to the public, participants need only bring or rent a canoe. This year's Trek will launch July 5 and finish July 25. For information, contact Trek Coordinator Sue Lincoln at 207-824-4627, email <slincoln@nxi.com>, or the website <www.androscogginriver.org>. *Pre-registration is required.*

**Narraguagus River Watershed Coalition Little River Bridge Project (stabilization).** July 14, 2001. For more information, or to volunteer contact the Downeast Salmon Federation's Wild Salmon Resource Center [phone: (207)483-4336 or website <www.mainesalmonrivers.org>].

### **Friends of Tunk Council and Celebration.** July 21-22, 2001.

For more info, contact the Downeast Salmon Federation's Wild Salmon Resource Center: <www.mainesalmonrivers.org> or (207)483-4336.

**Invasive Aquatic Species Workshops.** July 28 (Roxbury Pond) and August 4 (Standish), 7 (Belgrade), 15 (Mid Coast), and 18 (Turner). Sponsored by the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program. For more information, visit the Program on the web at <www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org> or call (207) 225-2070.

### **Stream Study Workshop.** August 15, 2001.

An opportunity for interested citizens to collaborate with stream professionals and learn the tricks of the trade. Specific Topics to be covered (including field demonstrations): macroinvertebrate sampling, water chemistry sampling, stream habitat surveys, and the question "What can I do with my data?". (See ad on page 5) Please call the MSTP to register for this event.

### **Maine Rivers 4th Annual Conference-**

#### **Making Connections: Rivers and People.** September 15 & 16, 2001.

September 15th— Conference at the Sockalexis Center, Penobscot Indian Nation, Indian Island near Old Town Maine. September 16th— Guided paddle down the Penobscot River. Welcoming Speaker: Chief Barry Dana, Penobscot Indian Nation. For more information and a brochure outlining the conference call Betsy Ham at 800-287-2345 or by e-mail at bham@nrcm.org.

**35th Annual Conference of the New England Environmental Education Alliance** Sept 14-16, 2001. A time for classroom teachers, students, naturalists, scientists, and grassroot educators to come together for a wonderful weekend of workshops, field trips and networking. The conference will be hosted by MEEA at lakeside Camp Matoaka near Waterville, Maine. For more info on the conference, go to the New England Environmental Education Alliance Conference 2001 web page (www.meeassociation.org) or contact **Dot Lamson** at 882-7323 or dlamson@chewonki.org.

## STREAM STUDY WORKSHOP - For Educators, Watershed Groups, & Interested Citizens

### What:

A gathering of educators, watershed groups, and other interested citizens, along with scientists to share stream study experiences and discuss the potential for increased collaboration and consistency around the state.

Specific Topics (including field demonstrations):



- + Macroinvertebrate Sampling
- + Water Chemistry Sampling
- + Stream Habitat Surveys
- + Working Towards a Citizen/Educator Stream-Information Database - or - "Where Can I Store My Data?"
- + Other related topics

### When:

**August 15, 2001** - 10 am - 2:30 pm

--- (Raindate: August 16; Contact the MSTP on August 14 if heavy rain is predicted)

--- Please contact the MSTP by August 9 to register for this event!

### Where:

**Field site-** the **Little River** (near South Windham) where it crosses Highway 202. We will carpool to the field site due to limited parking. For more details including where to meet or what to bring, visit us on-line or call the number on the back cover!

\*Note- There is no certification associated with this class but it is a great way to share and learn about various stream study techniques from experienced people and at the same time collaborate with folks who share your interests!

## Resources/Partnerships:

### Who Are Maine Shore Stewards?

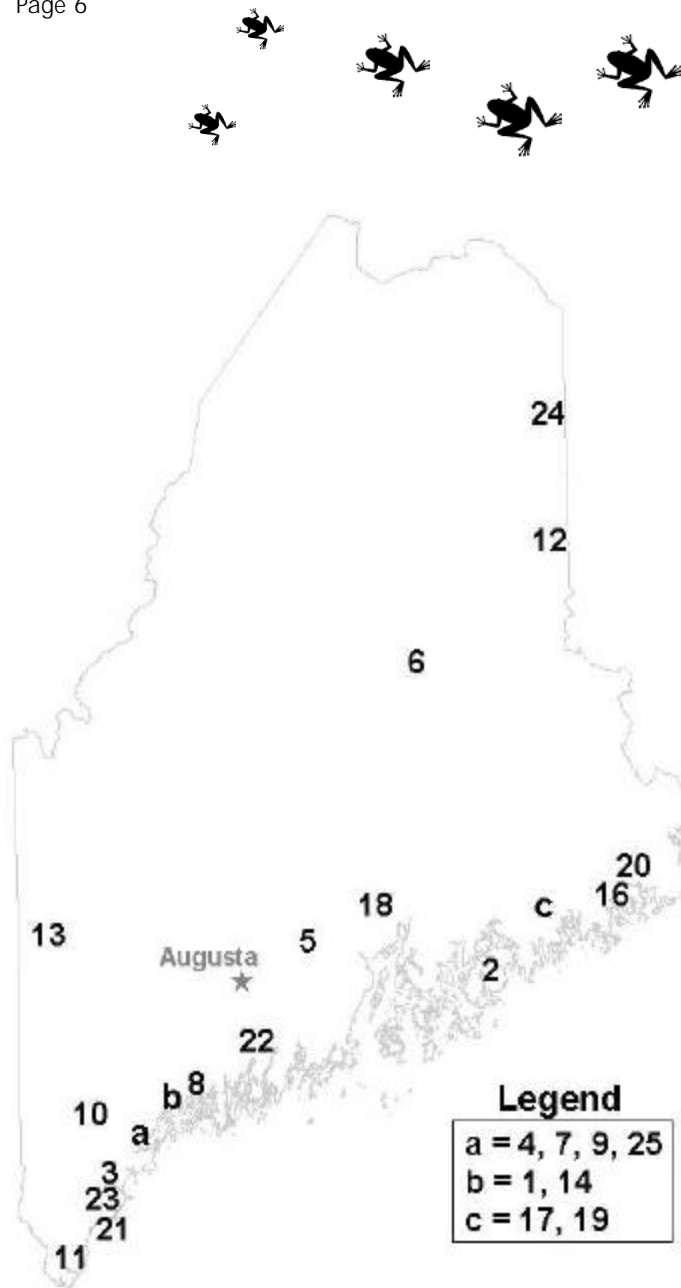
Maine Shore Stewards are citizen volunteers who care for the coast of Maine. Their efforts contribute important data and information to Maine's decision-makers to help solve pollution problems, restore clam flats and encourage the ethic of caring for the coast in Maine communities. There are many potential opportunities for Stream Teams in coastal watersheds to collaborate with existing groups and there are situations where existing Shore Stewards groups might benefit from this partnership.

Maine Shore Stewards is the new name for a collaboration that has been in existence for several years involving the Maine Coastal Program, state departments of Marine Resources (DMR) and Environmental Protection, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, and Maine Sea Grant to support the efforts of citizen volunteers. Projects of this collaboration include: Clean Water/Partners in Monitoring, the Maine Phytoplankton Monitoring Program, DMR volunteer water quality monitoring program, watershed management projects, and the Beach Profile Monitoring Project. With so many programs in place, and others likely to be added, the collaborators determined that bringing these projects under the single heading of Maine Shore Stewards will allow more efficient communication, recruitment, training, and data management, as well as better success in attracting funding for each of these projects.

The first issue of *The Maine Shore Steward* newsletter will be out in the end of June. It is full of information about programs and other volunteer-based programs along the coast. It is clear that our society needs quality information about our coastal waters and habitats to better manage these resources, and it is equally clear that the agencies need your help in collecting this information. For further information about any of these projects, contact Sarah Gladu at Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension at 1-800-244-2104 (ME), [sgladu@umext.maine.edu](mailto:sgladu@umext.maine.edu), and/or visit the Maine Shore Stewards web site: <http://www.ume.maine.edu/ssteward/> (by Sarah Gladu)

### Educational Collaborations within the Androscoggin Watershed

The Androscoggin River Watershed Council (ARWC) and the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) have joined forces to compile and distribute to educators an educational inventory of current and past projects that tie in to the watershed area and the Androscoggin River. The inventory will include details of the project and contact information. The ARWC and the AMC are also offering support and consultation to those teachers looking for resources to start projects or to find organizations that would be interested in their data. If you are a teacher within the Androscoggin River Watershed and are currently involved with any sort of land or water project or know of a teacher that is and would like to share your experiences with your peers, please contact Melissa Grella at 603/466-2721 ext. 212. The goal for compiling and distributing the inventory is for the 2001-02 school year. Working together to understand the health of the watershed area and the Androscoggin River system will lead students and teachers to a higher understanding and involvement in their local landscape. I hope to hear from you soon. (by Melissa Grella)



### Team #      Stream Team Name\*

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | Frost Gully ST                                    |
| 2  | Mt. Desert Island Water Quality Coalition ST      |
| 3  | Saco River (Watershed) Salmon Club Hatchery ST    |
| 4  | Portland High School ST                           |
| 5  | Sheepscot Wellspring Land Alliance                |
| 6  | Clean Streams Team                                |
| 7  | Presumpscot River Watch                           |
| 8  | Great Gully Creek ST                              |
| 9  | Hall ST   |
| 10 | Bonny Eagle ST                                    |
| 11 | Josias River ST                                   |
| 12 | Meduxnekeag Watershed Coalition                   |
| 13 | Sunday River ST                                   |
| 14 | Concord Gully ST                                  |
| 15 | Project SHARE                                     |
| 16 | Machias Team                                      |
| 17 | Narraguagus River Watershed Council               |
| 18 | Cove Brook Watershed Council                      |
| 19 | Friends of Tunk ST                                |
| 20 | East Machias Watershed ST                         |
| 21 | Coastal Conservation Association - So. ME Chapter |
| 22 | Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association Team    |
| 23 | Biddeford ST                                      |
| 24 | Easton Prestile ST                                |
| 25 | Windsor ST  |

## Stream Teams Around the State!

**\* For a complete list of teams, including their streams of interest and contact information, check out our website!!**



## Woody Debris In Our Streams...

(Continued from cover)..

**N**ow let's talk about all this "clutter" in the stream. Sometimes, in an attempt to clean up their stream or river, people might decide to pull out all of the "clutter", or pieces of natural wood and leaves, in and around the water. Though this might seem like a good idea, it generally is not the right thing to do. Organic matter such as leaves and twigs, along with fallen tree trunks and branches (referred to as **large** or **coarse woody debris**), is very important to the health of a stream. Leaves and twigs are a **food source** for many stream organisms, including microbes and macroinvertebrates (small, spineless creatures such as insects, snails, clams, worms, etc.). These small creatures, in turn, become a food source for fish and other animals. Fallen tree trunks and branches are important to streams because they retain these food materials in place so the small stream creatures can have a year-long food source. They also create a **diversity of habitats** in streams. Piles of woody debris act as **cover**, or resting/hiding places, for fish and other organisms. Large fallen trees also help to scour out **pools**, which are an important type of habitat in streams. This variety of habitat is important because, in general, greater biological diversity is associated with greater habitat diversity.



Photograph courtesy of John Sowles

So, if you are a landowner, or if you are planning a cleanup, please try to leave these natural materials in and around the stream. They are very important components of stream ecosystems! Please, however, do not dump yard waste and tree-trimmings into streams – that would only lead to problems for the stream. If you have any questions please contact us! (Note: Sometimes accumulations of large branches and logs directly in front of culverts cause stability problems. This material may need to be removed by maintenance crews.)

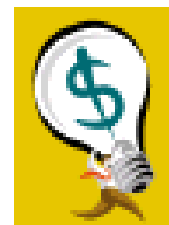
## **\$\$ Funding Section \$\$**

### **Mini-Grants for Educators**

MEEA's mini-grant program is designed to support teachers in their design and implementation of classroom, school, and community based environmental projects. For more information go to: [www.meeassociation.org](http://www.meeassociation.org)

### **New England Grassroots Environment Fund.**

The purpose of this fund is to increase engagement and participation in grassroots environmental initiatives and to build and connect healthy, sustainable, communities in New England. This particular fund is designed to help increase the number of citizens involved in concrete action. The Fund's primary objectives are building networks, increasing community involvement, and fostering environmental stewardship. Grants typically range from \$500- \$2,500. For more information go to: [www.grassrootsfund.org](http://www.grassrootsfund.org) or contact Cheryl King Fischer at [cfischer@plainfield.bypass.com](mailto:cfischer@plainfield.bypass.com) or call (802)223-4622.





## How Do I Join the MSTP?

It's easy! First, choose a stream or stream segment. Next, either obtain a "stream team registration form" by contacting us or fill out the online registration form. After registering, you will receive some helpful information and begin to receive our quarterly newsletter to help you stay up-to-date!

Membership to the program is free to any interested citizen, family, or organization! Once you have a "Team" and a stream, you're set! You can determine your stream's values and problems and you can plan projects based on your assessments. You can establish the course of events in protecting your stream. The Maine Stream Team Program can help you with ideas, advice, and informational materials!

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### Contact The Maine Stream Team Program (MSTP):

**Mail:** Maine Stream Team Program  
c/o Maine DEP  
312 Canco Road  
Portland, Maine 04103

**E-mail:** [mstp@state.me.us](mailto:mstp@state.me.us)

**Internet:** [www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/docstream/  
team/streamteam.htm](http://www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/docstream/team/streamteam.htm)

**Phone:** (888)769-1036 (toll free – ask for the Maine Stream Team Program);  
(207)822-6317 (Jeff Varricchione); (207)822-6427 (Heather Girard)

Deadline for submitting calendar items, articles, or profiles for the fall newsletter is October 1, 2001. Thanks!

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Maine Stream Team Program  
c/o Maine DEP  
312 Canco Road  
Portland, Maine 04103

